

The President's Daily Brief

25 February 1970

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

As evidence mounts that Arab terrorists are responsible for sabotaging two Israel-bound airliners, the Israeli Government may add direct retaliation to its diplomatic representations. (Page 1)

In Laos, the Communists continue to press the government defenders. (Page 2)

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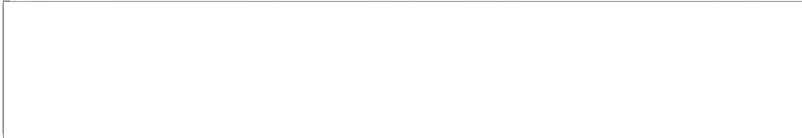
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The Kremlin may be hurting from the exposure of several Soviet intelligence officers. (Page 4)

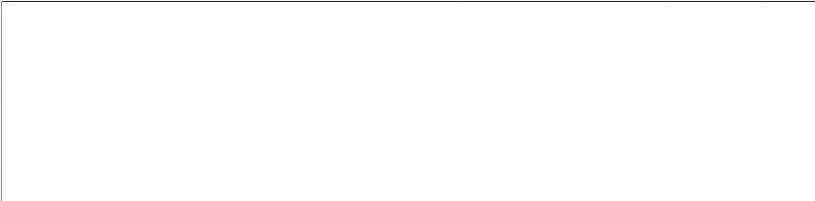
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ARAB STATES - ISRAEL



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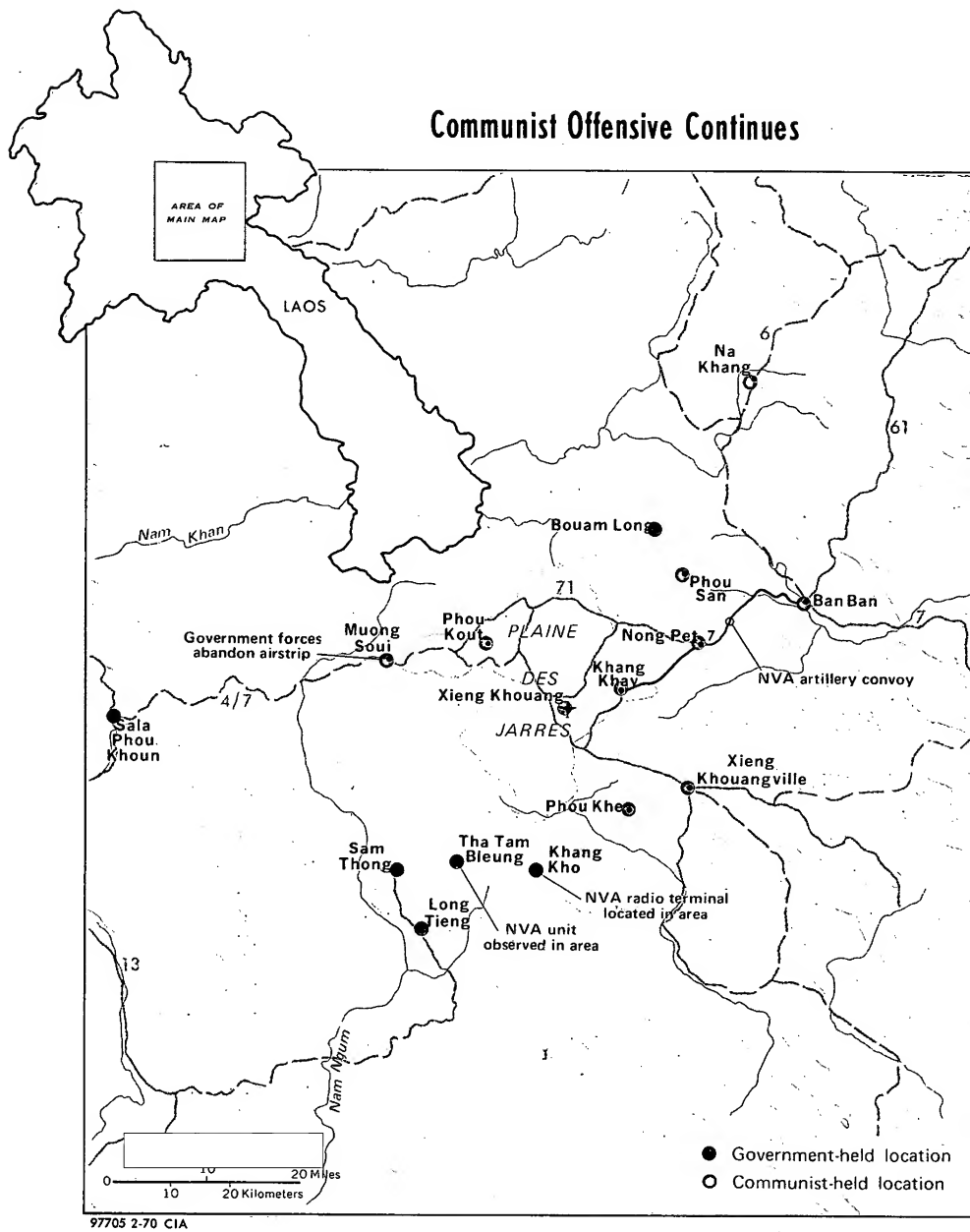


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In regard to the crash of the Swiss airliner on the same day, spokesmen for the several associations of fedayeen groups have been categorical in denying over-all fedayeen responsibility. They have, however, dodged the point of a specific retraction by the PFLP General Command, the terrorist group that initially claimed credit for the bombing. The US Embassy in Amman doubts whether the group ever explicitly disowned the claim.

Thus far, the Israeli Government has bent all its efforts toward engendering international action against an international threat, drawing on the worldwide revulsion against the two incidents. Should diplomatic efforts be unavailing, however, the Israeli instinct for retaliation could take the form of a counterblockade against civil airports in the Arab states.

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LAOS

Government patrols reported a North Vietnamese battalion moving into position near Tha Tam Bleung-- one of two Meo outposts guarding the northern approaches to Vang Pao's headquarters at Long Tieng. Two North Vietnamese radio terminals have been located close to the other outpost at Khang Kho.

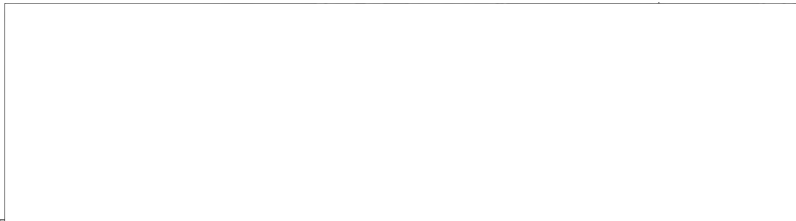
The Communists may be counting on disarray among the government defenders to provide an opportunity to push rapidly into Long Tieng. Vang Pao's guerrillas would then be defending their home area and are capable of putting up a strong fight. This prospect might encourage the Communists to continue their westward push instead.

In addition, the North Vietnamese are apt to be facing some supply difficulties. An unusual amount of truck traffic along Route 7 during daylight hours suggests that the Communists are taking extra risks to deliver materiel to the troops in the Plaine area.

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NORTH VIETNAM



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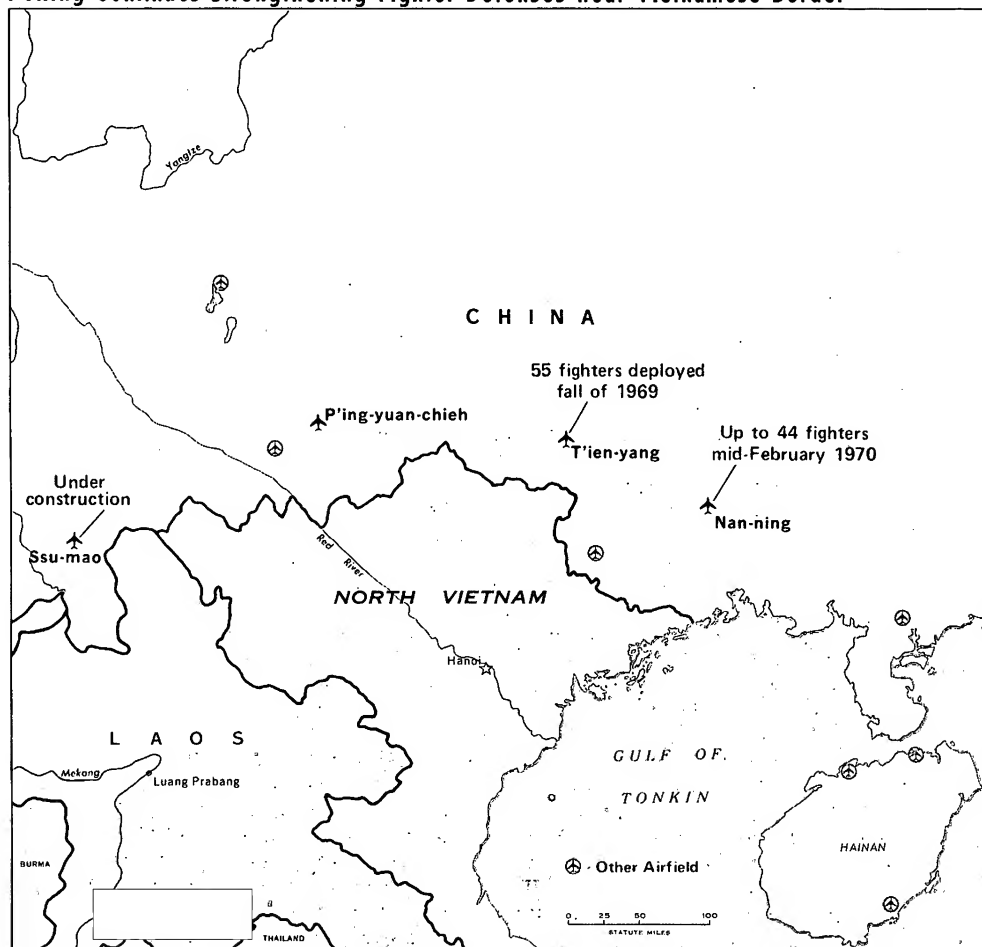
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USSR

The recent rash of public exposures of Soviet intelligence officers in various countries may be causing some disquiet in the Kremlin. There have been six such cases in the US, Italy, and Switzerland this month and more than 50 in the past year. In addition, explicit descriptions of three major Soviet espionage cases currently are being serialized in at least three foreign journals with wide circulations.

These incidents obviously are embarrassing to the KGB; in the past, similar exposures have caused considerable concern within the Soviet hierarchy. Last week Izvestiya carried the first public interview with George Blake, the convicted Soviet spy who escaped from a British prison in 1966. As might be expected, the article thoroughly discredits the British Intelligence Service. The timing of the Blake story, however, suggests that it also is an attempt to counter the KGB's bad press by highlighting one of its more successful operations.

Peking Continues Strengthening Fighter Defenses near Vietnamese Border



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NOTE

Communist China: Peking continues to build up its fighter defenses along the Vietnam border. Forty-four additional jets were sent to Nan-ning in mid-February, thus raising to about 100 the total number that have moved into the area in the past four months. In the future, fighters could also be deployed to Ssu-mao and P'ing-yuan-chieh airfields.

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